Lesson I

Punctuation Rules

Good punctuation makes a sentence clear and easy to read and understand, because it shows the grammatical structure of the text, its meaning, and often the relationship between words or clauses.

I. Full stop

The full stop is used:

- to mark **the end of a sentence** (unless the sentence ends with a question mark or an exclamation mark): The method proved to be very useful.

- in some **abbreviations**: e.g. (for example), etc. (and so on), p. (page), pp. (pages), fig. (figure), vol. (volume), dept. (department), usu. (usually), Brit. (British), Apr. (April).

- in **decimal numbers**: 0.25

II. Comma

1.The introducer comma is used after any element placed before the first independent clause in a sentence.

- -We decided not to join the project. **Obviously**, that was a mistake.
- **-In some cases**, the digital communication channel is used to get feedback from the customer.
- **If the experiment fails**, we will have to repeat it.

2. The coordinator comma used before a coordinating linker (and/or/but/nor/so/yet) links independent clauses.

- Teamwork is the norm**, and** team leaders need to understand how their technical expertise fits into their company´s strategy.
- At that college, students are not only exposed to lectures and seminars**, but** also have indepth discussions with industry leaders.

The coordinator comma links a series of three or more equal elements (nouns, adjectives, verbs, phrases).

- When preparing a paper, students learn to search, read, plan, write, and revise.

3. The inserter comma is placed before and after any element inserted into the middle of an independent clause.

- This solution, **in my opinion**, does not bring the desired effect.
- Their approach is**, basically,** similar to ours in many respects.

III. Semicolon (;) The semicolon is used to connect two independent clauses into a sentence. The sentence may/may not include a linker or an adverb.

1. My colleague did all the measurements and calculations; I analysed the results.

2. The cost of food has gone up in recent years; similarly, fuel prices have risen considerably.

IV. Colon (:)

The colon introduces an **explanation** or a **list**.

- The size of this mobile serves its purpose: to be easy to handle by senior users.
- The vast majority of telephone calls occur between spouses or close relations: parents and children, siblings, and so on.

V. Hyphen (**-**)

1.Add a prefix: Trans-Atlantic flights are costly.

2.Create compound words: Spider-Man is my favorite superhero.

Write numbers as words: I have lived in this house for thirty-three years.

VI. Dash (**– or —**) Make a brief interruption within a sentence or a parenthetical phrase: Johnny asked me—with a straight face, I might add—if he could borrow the car for the weekend.

VII. Quotation marks/Inverted commas (**“**) Quotation marks/ Inverted commas are used to enclose direct speech and quotations. They may be single ‘....’ or double “….” (mainly in AE)

- ‘I have spoken to him’, I said, ‘on only one occasion’ . (BE)
- “Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile. ” Albert Einstein(AE)

VIII. Capitals A capital letter is used for

- the **beginning of a sentence**: These robots are saving time, lives, and money.

- **proper nouns and adjectives** formed from proper nouns, e.g. September, Monday, John, Prague, England, the English (people), the English language, English (the language)

- the **main words** (i.e. nouns, adjectives, and verbs) in **titles** and **positions of people**, in **titles of books**, **plays**, **names of institutions**, e.g.

  Dean of the Faculty, Doctor/Professor Brown; Three Men in a Boat; Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Faculty of Nuclear Sciences and Physical Engineering

- **salutations and forms of address**, titles, greetings, and the complimentary close in letters, e.g.

  Dear Dr/ Professor/Mr/ Mrs/ Ms/Miss Brown/Sir/Madam; Yours sincerely/Sincerely (yours); Faithfully yours; Yours faithfully